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## 5. Urban Design Framework

### Illustrative Framework

Based on the Urban Design Principles described in Chapter 4, the Illustrative Framework brings these concepts together in an overall vision for the development of the Near Southeast. Building on the extensive development currently planned or underway in the area, the Framework describes how these projects, as well as future public and private developments, can be integrated with each other and with the surroundings. The Framework forms a unifying context of urban design and land use planning so that individual projects form part of a larger whole; new developments should use the Framework as a resource in understanding the emerging neighborhood context, and as a tool for planning and design.

Key aspects of the Urban Design Framework include:

- **Street and Block Plan** - a redesigned street network extends the L'Enfant grid to the waterfront and creates a structure for mixed-use development and public access on large former industrial sites such as the SEFC and East M Street areas.
- **Open Space Framework** - an integrated network of new and existing parks, plazas, greenways, trails, and green pedestrian-friendly streets provides better connectivity throughout the Near Southeast, and open space to support new uses and housing.
- **Trail System** - a set of trails and bike lanes provides accessibility for bicycles and pedestrians, and connects the Near Southeast to larger regional trail networks.
- **Land Use Framework** - a guide for the development of a diverse, mixed-use neighborhood incorporating greatly increased residential use, new office space, increased open space and retail space integrated in mixed-use areas.
- **Target Area Developments** - specific large-scale mixed-use developments that will have a major impact on the Near Southeast include the Southeast Federal Center, Washington Gas site, Florida Rock site, and the Canal Blocks area.

Each of these aspects is described in further detail in the following pages.

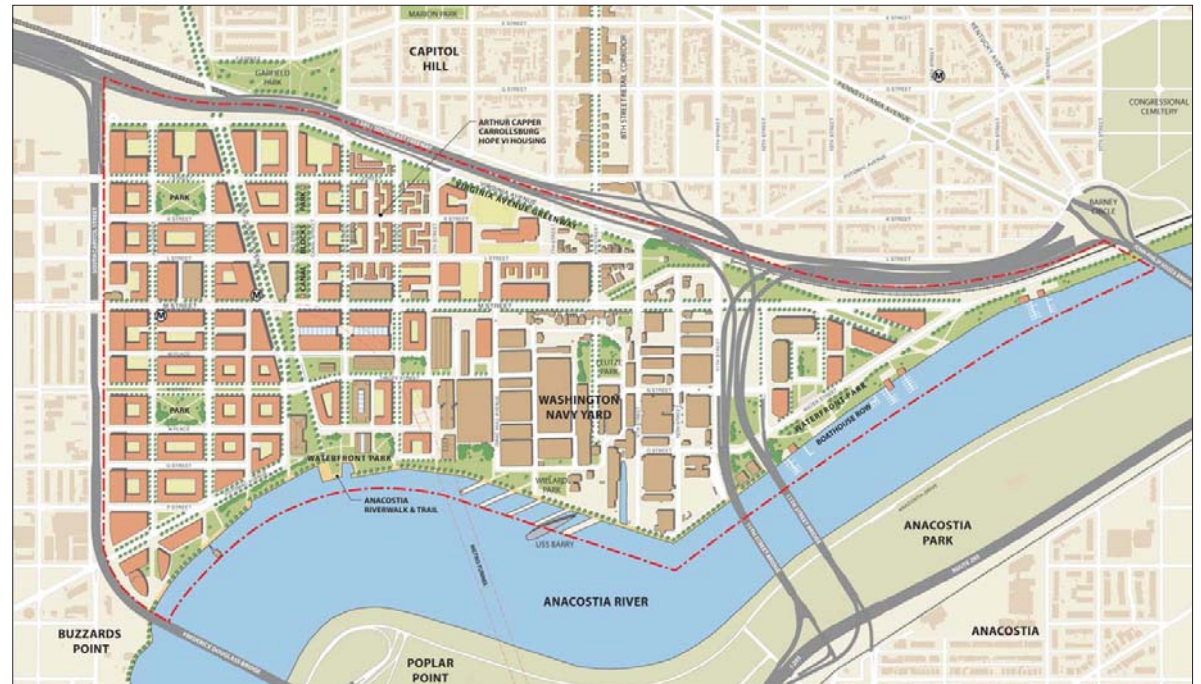
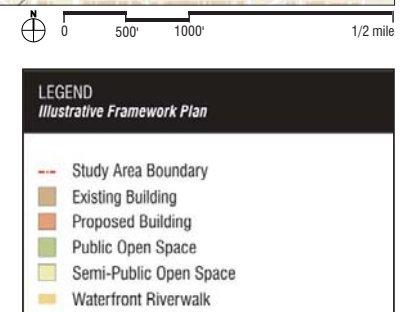


FIGURE 5.1  
**Illustrative Framework**



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## Street and Block Plan

A strong street and block system is essential to the creation of a new urban neighborhood in the Near Southeast. Streets are the principal element of the public realm, and should combine vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian circulation with landscaping and active uses to create a strong, vital and safe neighborhood. Since nearly all of the Near Southeast is within a 10 minute walk to the waterfront, pedestrian-friendly streets are critical to making this walk comfortable and attractive.

Although the L'Enfant street pattern exists in some parts of the Near Southeast, the areas south of M Street and east of 11th Street have historically been dominated by industrial uses and thus do not have a well-established street grid. To promote new mixed-use development in these areas, while ensuring public accessibility and connections to the waterfront and between neighborhoods, a series of new street patterns are created. The new streets are an extension of the surrounding grid, providing continuity of movement, view corridors to the river, and increased security and orientation.

Key elements of the Street and Block Plan include:

- **Southeast Federal Center** - the L'Enfant street grid and associated view corridors are extended to the waterfront through the SEFC site, including New Jersey Avenue, 3rd, 4th and 5th Streets. Connecting N Street with Tingey Street creates an east-west spine linking the SEFC to South Capitol Street and Southwest.
- **Potomac Avenue** - this L'Enfant diagonal is extended through the WASA site to connect the SEFC and waterfront park with the Florida Rock site and Buzzards Point to the west.
- **I Street** - a new connection between New Jersey Avenue and 2nd Street makes I Street an important east-west link, connecting Capitol Hill and the Canal Blocks with the South Capitol Street and Southwest areas.
- **East M Street** - the improvement of M Street will better connect this area to the rest of the Near Southeast, a rebuilt Water Street will provide waterfront park access, and a new segment of Virginia Avenue will terminate in a grand plaza overlooking the river.

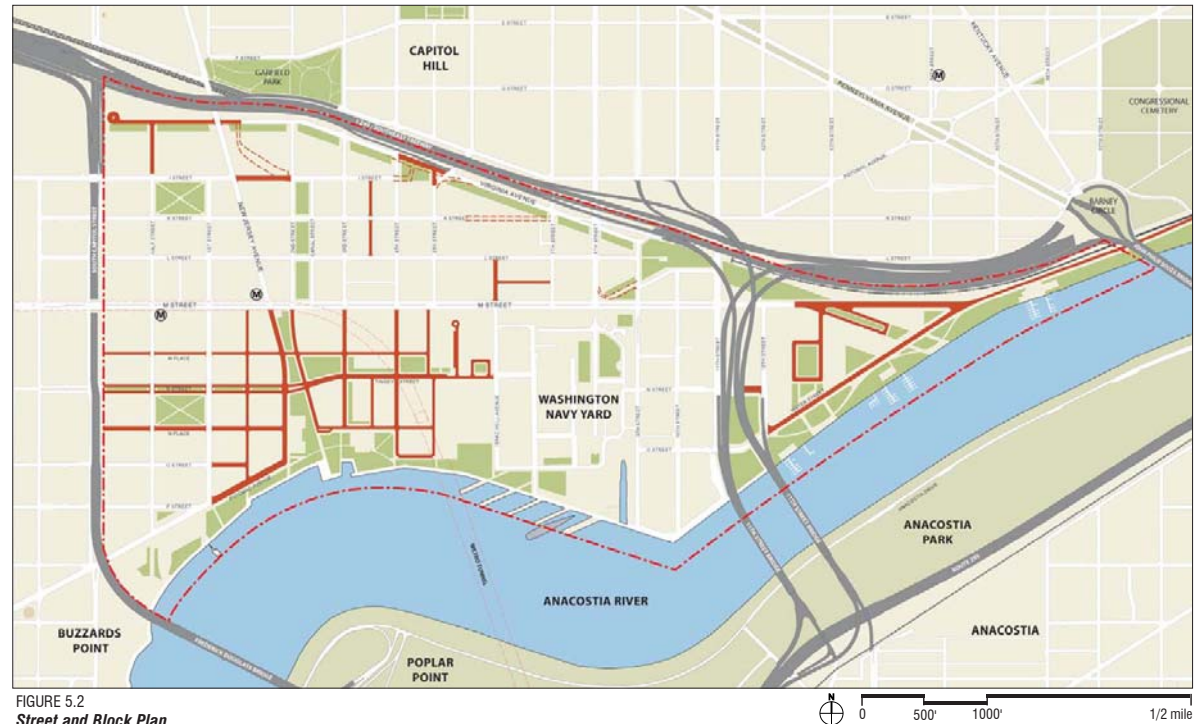


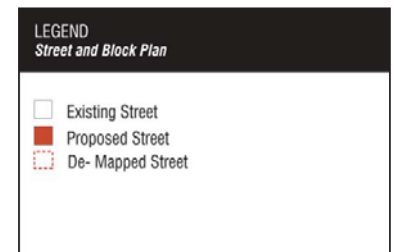
FIGURE 5.2  
**Street and Block Plan**



FIGURE 5.3  
**M Street**



FIGURE 5.4  
**Capper Carrollsburg**





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## Open Space Framework

New parks and open space are essential as the Near Southeast transitions from an industrial area to one supporting a large residential population and workforce. These spaces should provide a variety of open space types, from intimate neighborhood parks and playgrounds, to active and passive recreational areas, to waterfront destinations with active retail. All open spaces should be well connected by trails, greenways, and walkable neighborhood streets to each other and to surrounding neighborhoods such as Capitol Hill, Southwest and Buzzards Point.

Key elements of the Open Space Framework include:

- **Waterfront Parks at SEFC, Navy Yard and East M Street** - recent investments in waterfront green space at the Navy Yard will be complemented by the SEFC waterfront park, and a new, large waterfront park on a tract of publicly owned land along Water Street extending to the Souza Bridge.
- **Canal Blocks Park** - in the route of the historic canal, three narrow blocks will become a public park forming the centerpiece of the surrounding residential and mixed-use community, and providing a key north-south link through the area.
- **Virginia Avenue Greenway** - in the right-of-way of Virginia Avenue, a new greenway and dedicated off-street trail forms a major connection between the neighborhood and the waterfront, Garfield Park and Capitol Hill. The Greenway will pass below the freeway ramps at 11th Street to reach the East M Street waterfront park.
- **Marine Barracks Playing Fields** - these active playfields will provide a publicly accessible neighborhood amenity, connected to the Virginia Avenue Greenway.
- **Washington Gas and Florida Rock** - these large mixed-use developments will include significant public areas providing open space and public access to the waterfront from adjoining areas.
- **Neighborhood Parks** - new local parks in the South Capitol Street Gateway area will support the eventual development of residential and mixed-use space.
- **Green Streets** - improvements to landscaping, tree canopy, and sidewalks will make many neighborhood streets more walkable, improving pedestrian access throughout the area and creating links between open spaces.

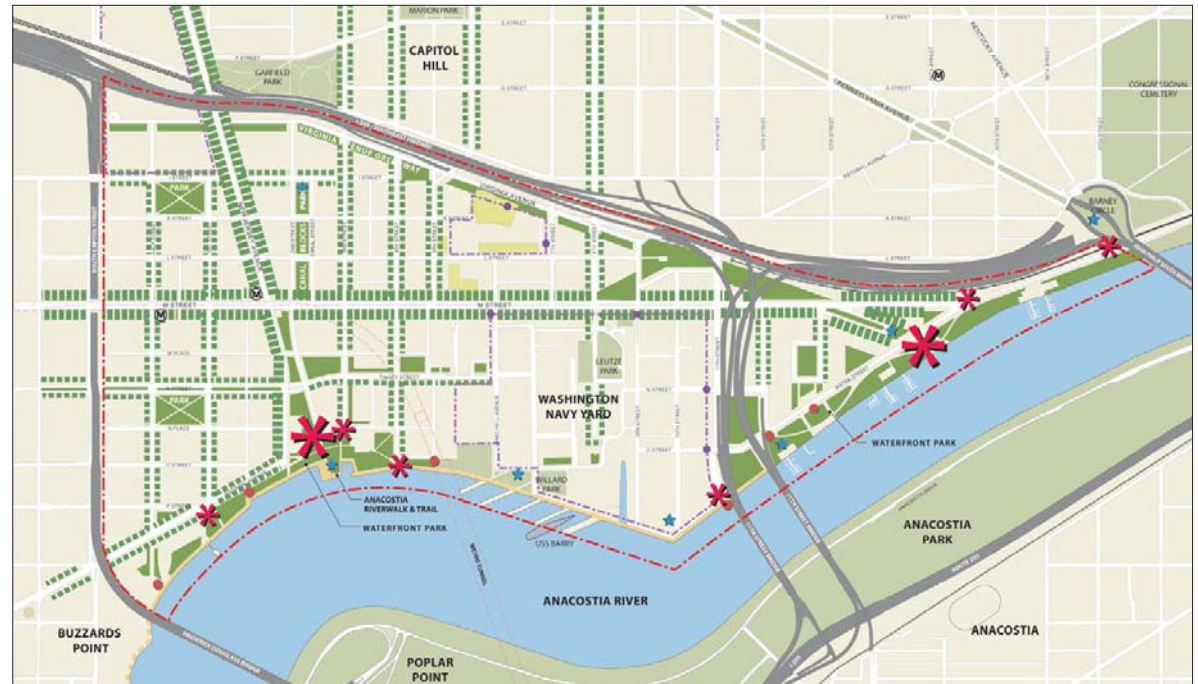


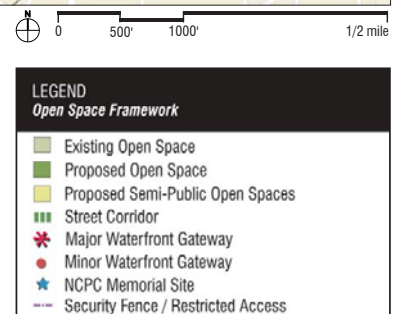
FIGURE 5.5  
**Open Space Framework**



FIGURE 5.6  
**View West on Virginia Avenue / Proposed Greenway**



FIGURE 5.7  
**Willard Park at the Navy Yard Waterfront**



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## Trail System

A number of significant citywide and regional trail systems will pass through the Near Southeast. An integrated trail plan ties the area into these systems while creating better access within the Neighborhood. Trail facilities are related to the Open Space Framework, in order to provide connections between parks and open spaces. Trails will include a number of dedicated off-street bikeways, and will be supplemented by the addition of on-street bike lanes.

Key elements of the Trail System include:

- **Anacostia Riverwalk and Trail** - a central element of the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative, the Riverwalk will provide continuous waterfront access on both sides of the Anacostia, connect to existing neighborhoods and parks, and be varied in character to match its surroundings, such as urban or natural areas.
- **East Coast Greenway** - a 2,600 mile multi-modal trail network planned to link East Coast cities from Maine to Florida, the East Coast Greenway will pass through the Near Southeast, paralleling the Riverwalk to the SEFC Waterfront Park, and there turning inland to follow the Canal Blocks and New Jersey Avenue to the US Capitol and the National Mall.
- **Virginia Avenue Greenway** - utilizing the existing Virginia Avenue right-of-way, this greenway will provide an off-street trail linking the East M Street waterfront with the Capper-Carrollsborg HOPE VI housing, Capitol Hill to the north, and Garfield Park.
- **Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail** - this trail system will connect the Chesapeake Bay and the Laurel Highlands of western Pennsylvania, in a corridor encompassing the Nation's capital and a variety of landscapes. The PHNST is being used by Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia to develop and make connections among trails, historic sites and a range of recreational and educational opportunities. The Anacostia Riverwalk and Trail will extend the PHNST by connecting the recreational and cultural opportunities along the Anacostia River to the Potomac, the C&O Canal and the Mount Vernon Trail.
- **On-Street Bicycle Facilities** - new bike lanes on Near Southeast streets will allow multi-modal transportation throughout the neighborhood. These will include I, M, N and P streets running east-west, and South Capitol Street, New Jersey Avenue, 1st, 3rd, 4th, 7th and 8th Streets running north-south.



FIGURE 5.8  
**Trail System**

0 500' 1000' 1/2 mile

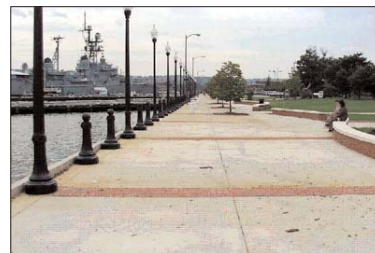


FIGURE 5.9  
**RiverWalk at Navy Yard**



FIGURE 5.10  
**Waterfront Promenade and Trail in Chicago, Illinois**







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## Proposed Land Use

The proposed land use for the Near Southeast includes a significant increase in residential density, concentrated primarily in the SEFC, South Capitol, Canal Blocks, and Capper-Carrollsbury HOPE VI areas, with additional units in the East M Street and 8th Street areas. Office development, combined with street-level retail, will continue to be encouraged along the M Street Corridor, and in the East M Street, Canal Blocks, and South Capitol Gateway areas. The Framework calls for an overall increase in retail space, which will serve both the growing residential and office community in the neighborhood. As the neighborhood continues to grow, the percentage of land occupied by surface parking should diminish as public space acreage and private development increases.

Specific target goals include:

- Increase the amount of public open space in the Near Southeast by over 300%, for a total of 60 acres;
- New construction to provide over 4,000 additional residential units;
- Encourage the growth of up to 14 million additional square feet of office space;
- Support the development of up to 750,000 square feet of retail space.

As the Near Southeast continues to grow and uses diversify, building type and density patterns must reflect the goals laid out in the Urban Design Framework. Generous building set-backs and configurations that retain important view sheds will encourage pedestrian activity and retain a neighborhood feel in the Near Southeast. Building heights, uses and design should be varied and incorporated into the overall fabric of the developing neighborhood.

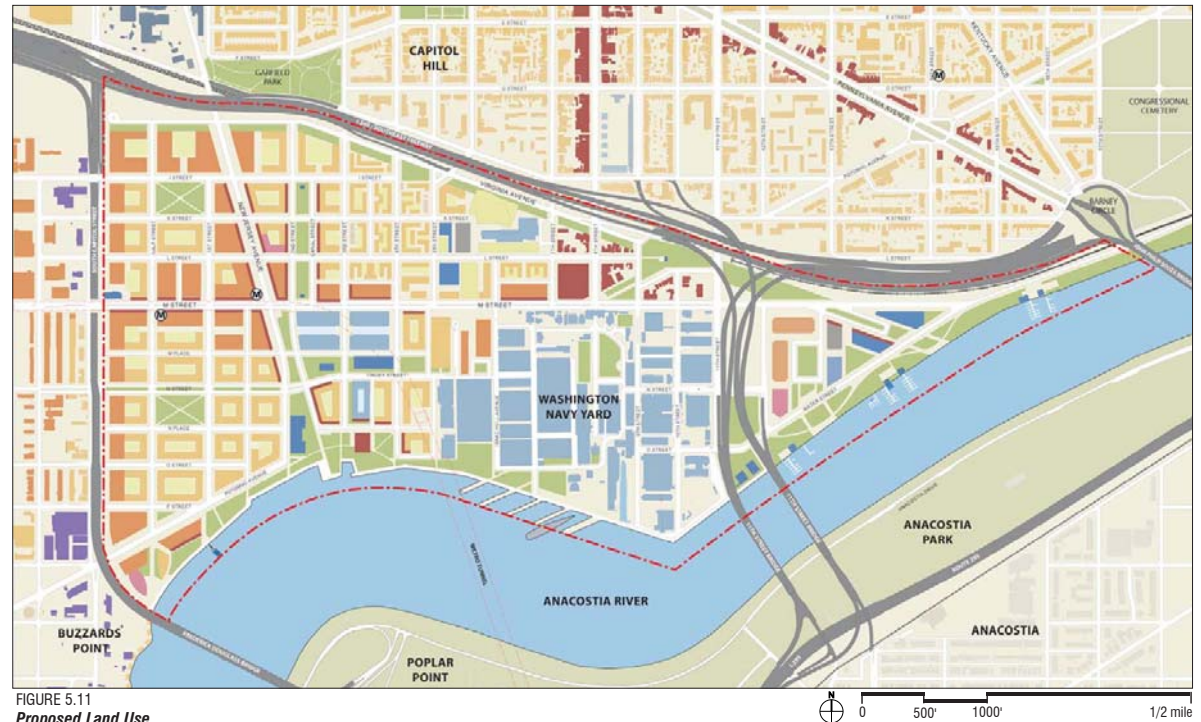


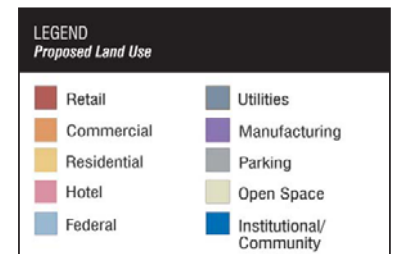
FIGURE 5.11  
**Proposed Land Use**



FIGURE 5.12  
**Commercial Office Development on M Street**



FIGURE 5.13  
**Proposed Capper-Carrollsbury HOPE VI Housing**



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## Target Area Developments: Southeast Federal Center

### Framework Design Issues

The 55-acre SEFC is the largest single redevelopment in the Near Southeast. Located between a large residential community and the waterfront, the project will dramatically improve public access to the Anacostia River, while creating a dense new mixed-use neighborhood. The key urban design aspects of the SEFC include:

- Extension of the L'Enfant street grid through the site for public circulation and waterfront access, including New Jersey Avenue, 3rd and 4th Streets, Tingey and N Streets, and others. This will allow the site to be integrated with its surroundings and provide a strong framework for development sites.
- Creation of a 5-acre waterfront park that will be a central element of the Anacostia Riverwalk and a destination for residents, employees, and visitors. New Jersey Avenue and the Canal Blocks Park should be linked to the waterfront park by an open space corridor, forming a grand gateway to the river.
- Adaptive reuse of notable historic structures on the site for residential, retail and cultural uses, to create visual landmarks and tie the development to the unique history of the Near Southeast.
- Integration of the site plan with anticipated improvements to the WASA property, recognizing the role of the Pumping Station as a visual landmark and the extension of the street grid to the river.

### Next Steps

As a result of the SEFC Public-Private Redevelopment Act, the site is reverting to private ownership and will therefore be subject to District zoning regulations. Future zoning should only allow for development plans that advance the vision of the Urban Design Framework.

- The District should work with the private developer selected through the SEFC Request for Proposal (RFP) Process to ensure that mixed-use development is incorporated throughout the site, and that the goals of the Urban Design Framework are reflected in the plan.
- A design competition should be conducted for the waterfront park. Other site development should provide and enhance connections to the waterfront through the SEFC site.

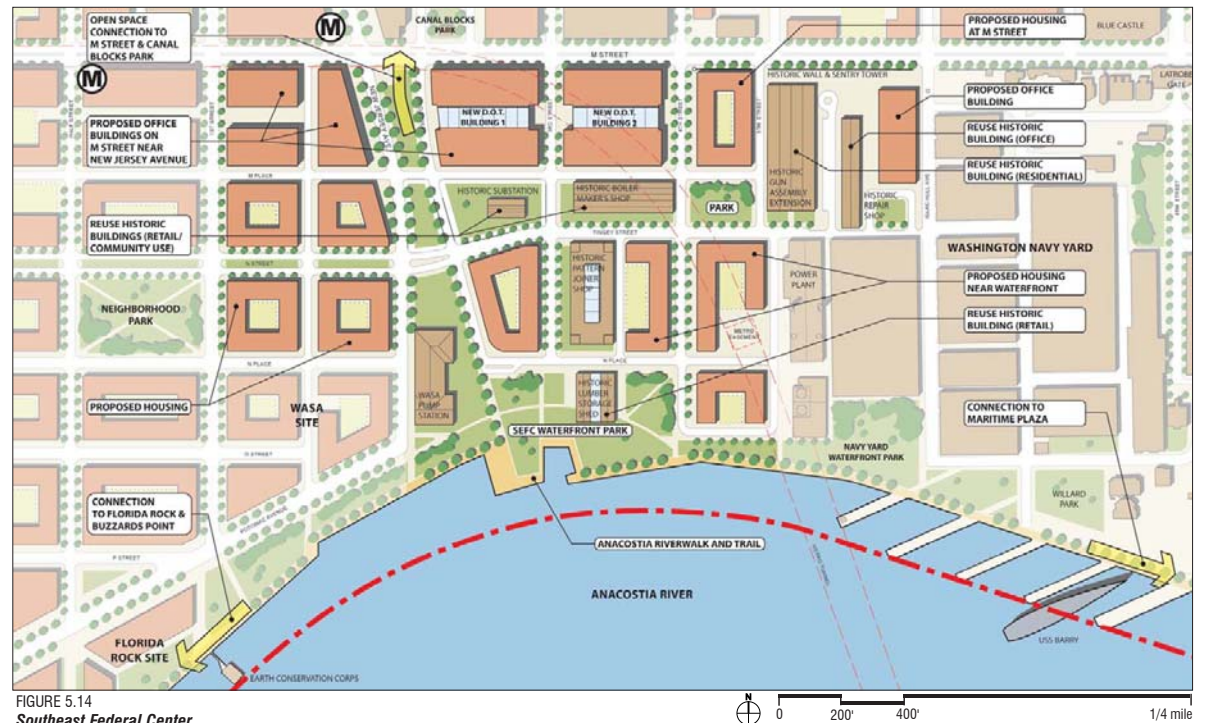


FIGURE 5.14  
Southeast Federal Center



FIGURE 5.15  
View towards Historic Electric Substation



FIGURE 5.16  
Historic Boiler Maker's Shop



FIGURE 5.17  
View to Waterfront with Historic Structures



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## Target Area Developments: East M Street / Washington Gas Site

### Framework Design Issues

Although currently isolated from its surroundings, the East M Street area will form the juncture of the Riverwalk, M Street and the Virginia Avenue Greenway, ensuring greater visibility and access. The elevated topography provides sweeping river views, and the creation of a pastoral waterfront park will make the area a recreational destination. The key urban design issues include:

- The development of Virginia Avenue as a gateway to the river, including a dramatic plaza at the terminus of the Virginia Avenue Greenway, and provision for public steps or other access to the waterfront park below.
- Creation of a large waterfront park bordered by an improved Water Street, recovering green space and public waterfront access from existing parking lots and other inappropriate uses, and providing a setting for an improved "Boathouse Row."
- Inclusion of public open space on the Washington Gas site which makes a strong connection to the waterfront park, providing access and movement through the site from M Street.
- Careful integration of parking garages and surface lots, to avoid impacting public spaces and views.

### Next Steps

As the Maritime Plaza development on the former Washington Gas Site proceeds into additional phases and the Stewart Petroleum site is developed, it is crucial that the Zoning Commission enforces the goals of the Urban Design Framework at this key waterfront location.

- The District should ensure that new development at Maritime Plaza includes a mix of uses in addition to the existing office space, that parking is carefully integrated, and that public access is provided into and through the site.
- The District should work with private developers, the Department of Transportation, and the National Park Service to ensure that the terminus of Virginia Avenue has an active mix of uses on both sides and is connected to the waterfront park and Riverwalk.



FIGURE 5.18  
*Washington Gas Site from the South*

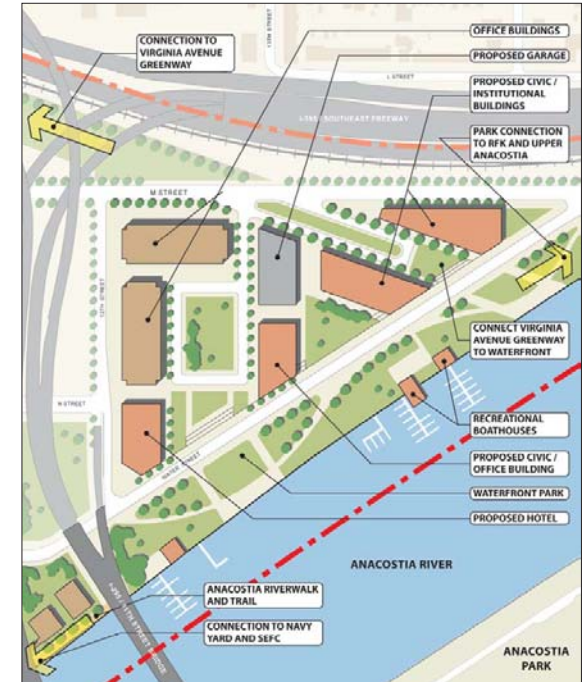


FIGURE 5.19  
*Washington Gas Site*



FIGURE 5.20  
*View along M Street looking West*



FIGURE 5.21  
*Current Use of Waterfront for Parking*



FIGURE 5.22  
*View Across the Anacostia River*

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## Target Area Developments: Canal Blocks

### Framework Design Issues

The proposed Canal Blocks Park will become a central public open space for the surrounding residential and mixed-use areas. Development around the park should maximize this opportunity, while creating a strong setting for the green space. Key urban design issues include:

- Creation of an attractive, neighborhood-oriented park that will provide a strong identity and sense of place for the community, and a memorable address for the surrounding buildings.
- Mixed-use development, including dense residential, commercial and retail, and including active uses facing the park that relate to neighborhood needs.
- Establishment of a coherent massing and design approach for the surrounding buildings to create a strong visual setting for the park.
- Creating linkages to surrounding areas including Garfield Park, the SEFC Waterfront Park, and to the west, including the connection of I Street between 2nd Street and New Jersey Avenue.

### Next Steps

The Planned Unit Development (PUD) process can provide a means of coordinating and guiding development in the Canal Blocks area.

- Through the PUD process, the District should work with Canal Blocks area developers to incorporate mixed-use, ground floor retail facing the park, and the integrated design of facades and streetscape. In exchange the process can allow for flexibility in density limits, building height and other aspects.
- The District should conduct a design competition for the design of the Canal Blocks Park. Parameters for the competition should be informed by the Near Southeast Urban Design Framework.
- The District should work with the private developers and the local community to determine an ownership and management strategy for the Canal Blocks Park that will allow for public access, provide for its ongoing maintenance, and for the operation of any public facilities in the park.



FIGURE 5.23  
*Canal Blocks Site from the South*



FIGURE 5.25  
*Sketch of HOPE VI Development at Canal Blocks Park*

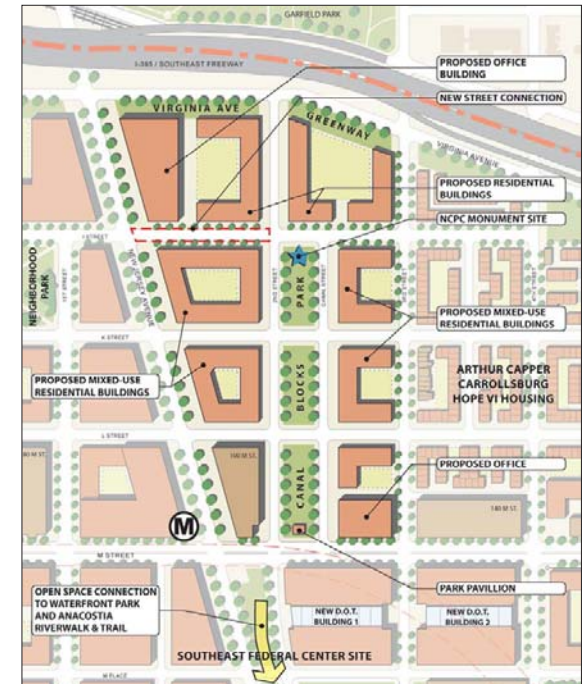


FIGURE 5.24  
*Canal Blocks Site*



FIGURE 5.26  
*View along Canal Street*





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## Target Area Developments: Florida Rock Site

### Framework Design Issues

The Florida Rock site is located at a gateway to the Near Southeast and the central city from the Frederick Douglass Bridge. The development of this site will play an important role in the future improvement of the South Capitol Street Corridor, as well as the creation of the Anacostia Riverwalk and surrounding public spaces. Key urban design issues for the site include:

- Provision for a generously sized and landscaped riverfront public open space as part of the Anacostia Riverwalk and Trail, with continuous water edge access.
- Inclusion of key view corridors and public access through the site at Half and 1st Streets.
- Creation of a mixed-use development including residential, hotel, office, and retail.
- Integration of the site plan with the future redevelopment of the WASA property, including the extension of Potomac Avenue east to the SEFC site.

### Next Steps

The District should work with the developer of the Florida Rock site to ensure that the design, density and mix of uses on the site reflects the principles of the Urban Design Framework.

- The PUD process will allow flexibility in site planning in exchange for compliance with the goals of the Urban Design Framework for the Near Southeast. Specifically, the District may permit increased heights and densities in some areas in exchange for including a substantial residential component, generous public access through the site and along the waterfront, and frequent views through the site from the adjacent neighborhood to the water.

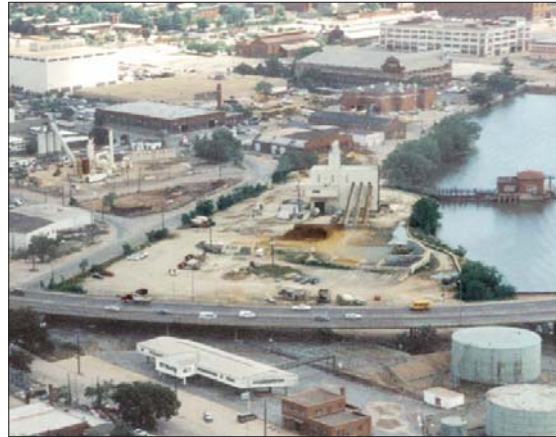


FIGURE 5.27  
*Florida Rock Site from the Southwest*



FIGURE 5.29  
*New Seawall at Florida Rock Site*

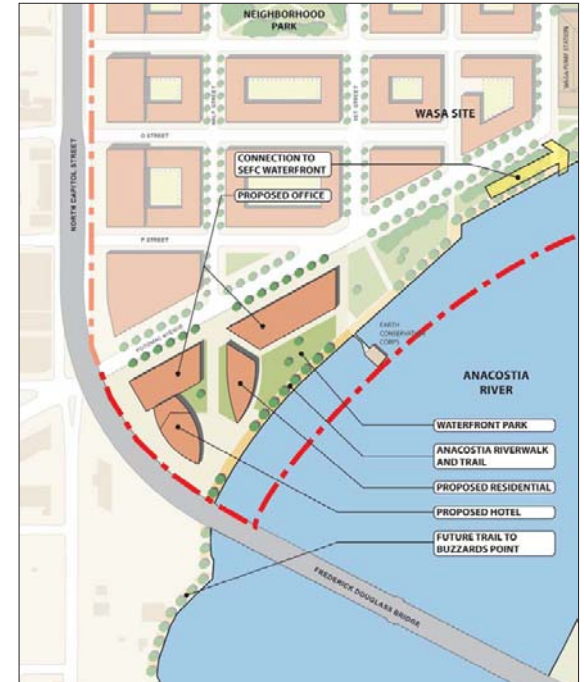


FIGURE 5.28  
*Florida Rock Site*

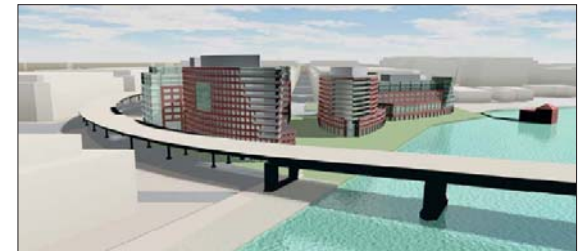


FIGURE 5.30  
*Rendering of Proposed Development*